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Moses Lake
Grant County, Washington

National Eutrophication Survey, Las Vegas, Nev

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Environmental Monitoring and Support Lab, Las Vegas, Nev

Jul 77

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Report
on
Moses Lake
Grant County
Washington
EPA Region X
Working Paper No. 872

With the cooperation of the
Washington Department of Ecology
and the
Washington National Guard
July, 1977

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16. ABSTRACT

Annual total phosphorus and total nitrogen loadings to the lake were estimated and subdivided according to either point or non-point source origin. An assessment of the lake's trophic condition and limiting nutrient is also provided. All data collected by the U.S.E.P.A. National Eutrophication Survey during the one year study of the lake and its tributaries are included in the report.

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REPORT ON MOSES LAKE

GRANT COUNTY, WASHINGTON

EPA REGION X

by

National Eutrophication Survey

Water and Land Quality Branch
Monitoring Operations Division
Environmental Monitoring & Support Laboratory
Las Vegas, Nevada

and

Special Studies Branch
Corvallis Environmental Research Laboratory
Corvallis, Oregon

Working Paper No. 872

OFFICE OF RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT
U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

July 1977

CONTENTS

	Page
Foreword	ii
List of Washington Study Lakes	iv
Lake and Drainage Area Map	v-vi
Sections	
I. Conclusions	1
II. Lake and Drainage Basin Characteristics	4
III. Lake Water Quality Summary	6
IV. Nutrient Loadings	13
V. Literature Reviewed	19
VI. Appendices	20

FOREWORD

The National Eutrophication Survey was initiated in 1972 in response to an Administration commitment to investigate the nationwide threat of accelerated eutrophication to freshwater lakes and reservoirs.

OBJECTIVES

The Survey was designed to develop, in conjunction with state environmental agencies, information on nutrient sources, concentrations, and impact on selected freshwater lakes as a basis for formulating comprehensive and coordinated national, regional, and state management practices relating to point source discharge reduction and nonpoint source pollution abatement in lake watersheds.

ANALYTIC APPROACH

The mathematical and statistical procedures selected for the Survey's eutrophication analysis are based on related concepts that:

a. A generalized representation or model relating sources, concentrations, and impacts can be constructed.

b. By applying measurements of relevant parameters associated with lake degradation, the generalized model can be transformed into an operational representation of a lake, its drainage basin, and related nutrients.

c. With such a transformation, an assessment of the potential for eutrophication control can be made.

LAKE ANALYSIS

In this report, the first stage of evaluation of lake and watershed data collected from the study lake and its drainage basin is documented. The report is formatted to provide state environmental agencies with specific information for basin planning [§303(e)], water quality criteria/standards review [§303(c)], clean lakes [§314(a,b)], and water quality monitoring [§106 and §305(b)] activities mandated by the Federal Water Pollution Control Act Amendments of 1972.

Beyond the single lake analysis, broader based correlations between nutrient concentrations (and loading) and trophic condition are being made to advance the rationale and data base for refinement of nutrient water quality criteria for the Nation's freshwater lakes. Likewise, multivariate evaluations for the relationships between land use, nutrient export, and trophic condition, by lake class or use, are being developed to assist in the formulation of planning guidelines and policies by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and to augment plans implementation by the states.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The staff of the National Eutrophication Survey (Office of Research and Development, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency) expresses sincere appreciation to the Washington Department of Ecology for professional involvement, to the Washington National Guard for conducting the tributary sampling phase of the Survey, and to those Washington wastewater treatment plant operators who provided effluent samples and flow data.

Ms. Barbara Blau, Lake Restoration Program, and the staff of the Washington Department of Ecology, Lake Restoration Program, provided invaluable lake documentation and counsel during the Survey, reviewed the preliminary reports and provided critiques most useful in the preparation of this Working Paper Series.

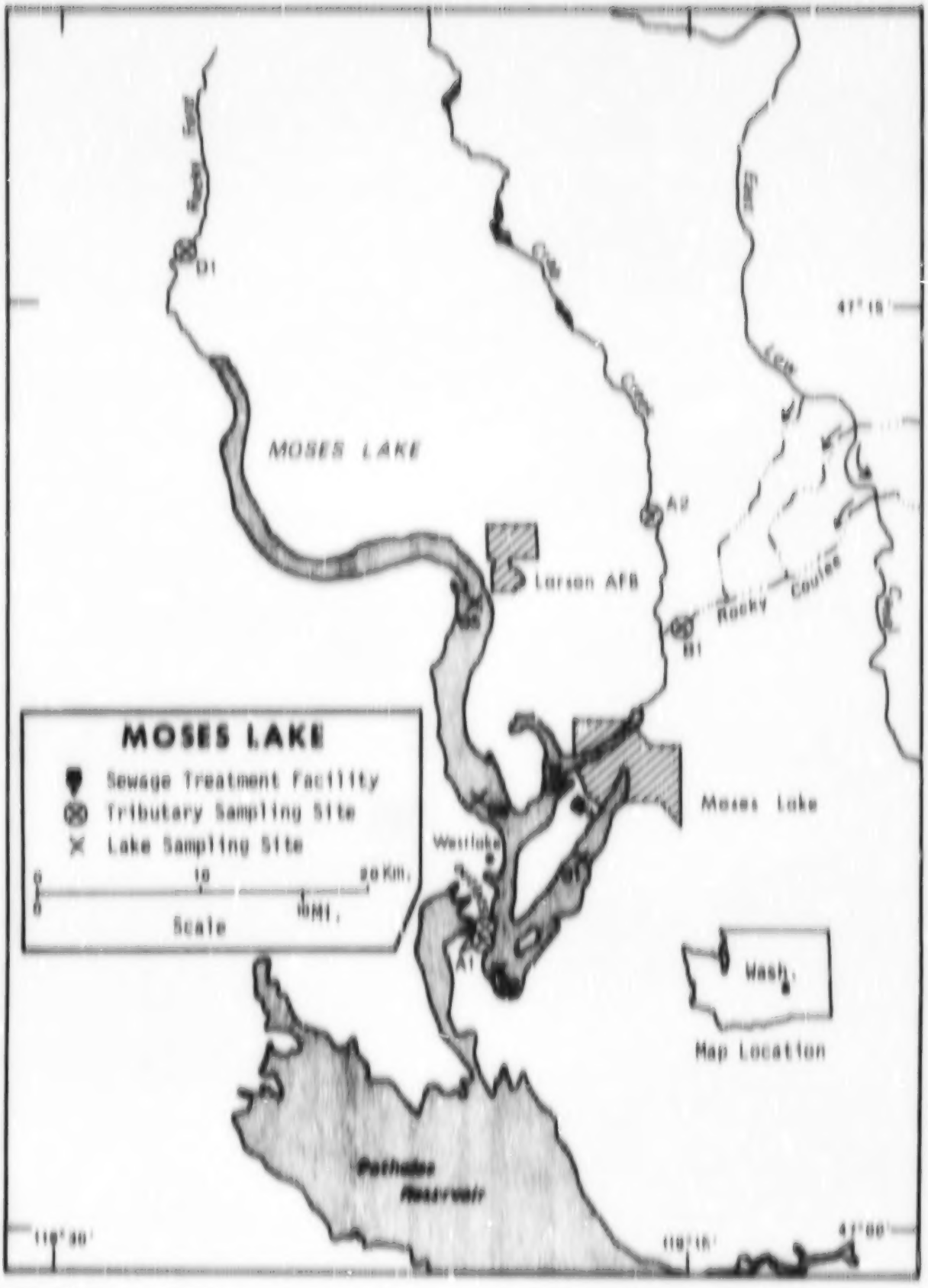
Major General Howard S. McGee, Adjutant General of Washington, and Project Officer Colonel Clinton C. Johnson, who directed the volunteer efforts of the Washington National Guardsmen, are also gratefully acknowledged for their assistance to the Survey.

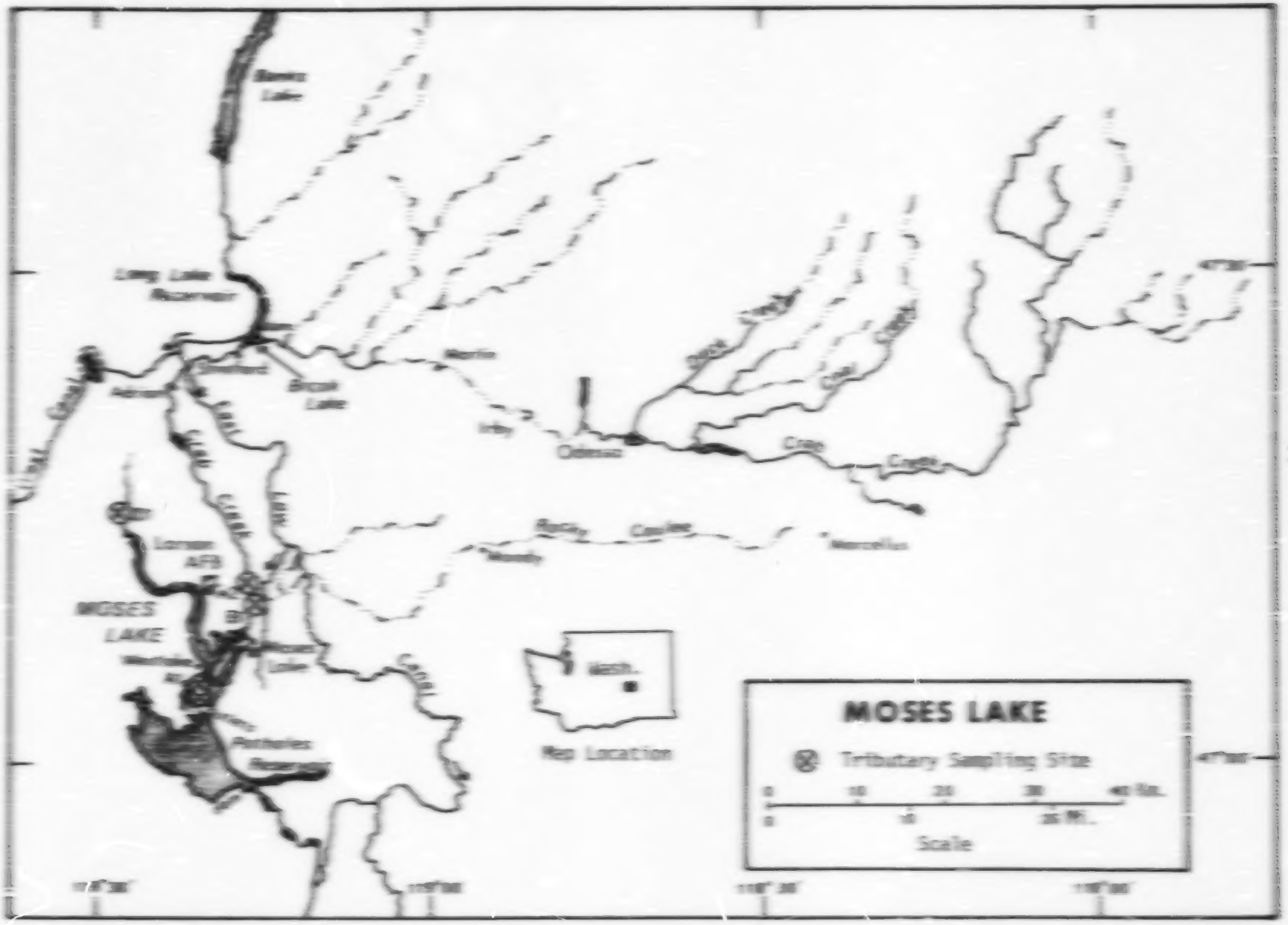
NATIONAL EUTROPHICATION SURVEY

STUDY LAKES

STATE OF WASHINGTON

LAKE NAME	COUNTY
American Lake	Pierce
Banks Lake	Grant, Douglas
Chelan Lake	Chelan
Diamond Lake	Pend Oreille
Green Lake	King
Keechelus Lake	Kittitas
Mayfield Lake	Lewis
Medical Lake	Spokane
Moses Lake	Grant
Ozette Lake	Clallam
Sammamish Lake	King
Lake Whatcom	Whatcom
Lower Granite Reservoir	Garfield, Whatcom


MOSES LAKE
Sewage Treatment Facility
Tributary Sampling Site
Lake Sampling Site
0
10
20 Km.
0
6 MI.
Scale
D1
A2
B1
A1
Larson AFB
Rocky Coulee
Moses Lake
Westlake
Potholes Reservoir
Wash.
Map Location
47°15'
47°00'
119°30'
119°15'


MOSES LAKE
Tributary Sampling Site
Scale
Map Location

REPORT ON MOSES LAKE, WASHINGTON

STORET NO. 5309

I. CONCLUSIONS

A. Trophic Condition:*

Survey data indicate that Moses lake is eutrophic, i.e., nutrient rich and highly productive. Whether such nutrient enrichment is to be considered beneficial or deleterious is determined by its actual or potential impact upon designated beneficial ster uses of the lake.

Chloropnyll a values in the lake ranged from 1.6 µg/l in April to 84.6 µg/l in September, with a mean of 29.1 µg/l. Lake water transparency was low and potential for primary production as measured by algal assay control yield was high in both spring and fall. Severe hypolimnetic oxygen depression was observed at several stations in the lake during July and September samplings. Of the 13 Washington lakes sampled in 1975, only 1 had higher median total phosphorus levels (0.115 mg/l), 3 had higher median inorganic nitrogen levels (0.150 mg/l) and 1 had higher median orthophosphorus levels (0.038 mg/l) than Moses Lake.

Survey limnologists reported algal blooms during July and October sampling. Other sources (Olson, N.P., 1976; Ketelle and Uttormark, 1971) report that this historically

*See Appendix E.

eutrophic lake receives heavy recreational use and nuisance blue-green algae blooms throughout the summer.

B. Rate-Limiting Nutrient:

The algal assay results indicate that Moses Lake was limited by available nitrogen in the eastern arm during both spring and fall sampling, and phosphorus- or colimited in the western arms of the lake at those times. The lake data suggest primary limitation by nitrogen throughout the lake on all three sampling occasions except at Stations 03-05 in the spring, where phosphorus limitation is suggested.

C. Nutrient Controllability:

1. Point sources -

During the sampling year, the city of Moses Lake contributed 31.8% of the total phosphorus load to Moses Lake from a single sewage treatment plant. Exceedingly high phosphorus levels at lake Stations 01 and 02 reflect the discharges from the plant in the northeastern arm of the lake.

The calculated annual phosphorus loading of 1.13 g $P/m^2/yr$ is more than twice that proposed by Vollenweider (1975) as "eutrophic" for a lake with such volume and hydraulic retention time (269 days). Elimination of the Moses Lake sewage treatment plant discharges would be expected to effect some water quality improvement in the lake; however, further reduction

in nutrient loadings, including nonpoint, would be necessary to reduce the annual phosphorus loading to below Vollenweider's "eutrophic" level.

In March 1977, the Moses Lake Irrigation and Rehabilitation District began periodically diverting water from the Columbia River into Parker Horn (Welch and Lindell, 1977). It has not yet been determined what long term effects will result from the addition of low nutrient water into Moses Lake, nor at what rate nutrient concentrations will increase to predilution levels. Nevertheless, substantial improvement in water quality in Parker Horn and the southwestern arm of Moses Lake can probably be expected.

2. Nonpoint sources -

Nonpoint sources, including precipitation, contributed 68.2% of the total phosphorus load to Moses Lake during the sampling year. Rocky Ford Creek contributed 35.5% of the total, Crab Creek and Rocky Coulee Wasteway contributed 15.4% and 12.3%, respectively, and ungaged drainage areas contributed an estimated 3.4% of the total phosphorus load. Welch and Lindell (1977) report that high phosphorus and nitrogen loading to the lake can primarily be attributed to irrigation return flow.

II. LAKE AND DRAINAGE BASIN CHARACTERISTICS

Lake and drainage basin characteristics are itemized below. Lake morphometry data were provided by Walcott (1965). Tributary flow data were provided by the Washington District Office of the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS). Outlet drainage area includes the lake surface area. Mean hydraulic retention time was obtained by dividing the lake volume by mean flow of the outlet. Precipitation values are estimated by methods as outlined in National Eutrophication Survey (NES) Working Paper No. 175. A table of metric/English conversions is included as Appendix A.

A. Lake Morphometry:

1. Surface area: 27.50 km^2.
2. Mean depth: 5.9 meters.
3. Maximum depth: 11.6 meters.
4. Volume: 161.587 x 10^6 m^3.
5. Mean hydraulic retention time: 289 days.

B. Tributary and Outlet:
(See Appendix B for flow data)

1. Tributaries -

Name	Drainage area (km^2)	Mean flow (m^3/sec)
A-2 Crab Creek	5770.5	2.01
B-1 Rocky Coulee Wasteway	704.0	0.00
D-1 Rocky Ford Creek	1217.3	2.55
Minor tributaries and immed'ate drainage -	270.7	0.00
Totals	7962.5	4.56
2. Outlet - A-1 Crab Creek	7990.1	6.48

C. Precipitation:

1. Year of sampling: 17.0 cm.
2. Mean annual: 20.0 cm.

III. LAKE WATER QUALITY SUMMARY

Moses Lake was sampled three times during the open-water season of 1975 by means of a pontoon-equipped Huey helicopter. Each time, samples for physical and chemical parameters were collected from five stations on the lake and from a number of depths at each station (see maps, pages v, vi). During each visit, depth-integrated samples were collected from each station for chlorophyll a analysis and phytoplankton identification and enumeration. During the first and last visits, 18.9-liter depth-integrated samples were composited for algal assays. Maximum depths sampled were 2.1 meters at Station 01, 9.1 meters at Station 02, 4.0 meters at Station 03, 6.7 meters at Station 04, and 6.4 meters at Station 05. For a more detailed explanation of NES methods, see NES Working Paper No. 175.

The results obtained are presented in full in Appendix C and are summarized in III-A for waters at the surface and at the maximum depth for each site. Results of the phytoplankton counts and chlorophyll a determination are included in III-B. Results of the limiting nutrient study are presented in III-C.

[illegible]

[illegible] PHYSICAL AND CHEMICAL CHARACTERISTICS

PARAMETER		[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]		[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]		[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]		[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	
[illegible]																	
[illegible]																	
[illegible]																	

B. Biological Characteristics:

1. Phytoplankton -

Sampling Date	Dominant Genera	Algal Units per ml
04/02,03/75	1. Stephanodiscus	37,485
	2. Scenedesmus	813
	3. Cryptomonas	642
	4. Chroomonas	426
	5. Melosira	342
	Other genera	1,241
	Total	40,951
07/21/75	1. Aphanizomenon	5,406
	2. Oocystis	2,806
	3. Scenedesmus	1,471
	4. Melosira	763
	5. Chroomonas	479
	Other genera	1,472
	Total	12,387
09/10/75	1. Aphanizomenon	7,171
	2. Oocystis	860
	3. Cryptomonas	702
	4. Melosira	481
	5. Oscillatoria	444
	Other genera	923
	Total	10,571

2. Chlorophyll a -

Sampling Date	Station Number	Chlorophyll a (ug/l)
04/02,03/75	01	2.3
	02	1.6
	03	3.3
	04	11.4
	05	7.8
07/21/75	01	46.8
	02	9.3
	03	31.4
	04	31.4
	05	10.3
09/10/75	01	84.6
	02	60.1
	03	62.4
	04	31.2
	05	2.0

C. Limiting Nutrient Study:

1. Autoclaved, filtered, and nutrient spiked -

Spike (mg/l)	Ortho P Conc. (mg/l)	Inorganic N Conc.(mg/l)	Maximum Yield (mg/l-dry wt.)
a. 04/03/75	Stations 01-03		
Control	0.008	0.296	13.7
0.05 P	0.138	0.296	12.8
0.05 P + 1.0 N	0.138	1.296	36.7
1.00 N	0.008	1.296	32.4
	Stations 04,05		
Control	0.032	0.472	8.9
0.05 P	0.082	0.472	14.5
0.05 P + 1.0 N	0.082	1.472	18.3
1.00 N	0.032	1.472	9.1
b. 09/10/75	Stations 01,02		
Control	0.340	0.370	14.8
0.05 P	0.390	0.370	15.1
0.05 P + 1.0 N	0.390	1.370	43.3
1.00 N	0.340	1.370	41.8
	Stations 03-05		
Control	0.075	0.395	7.7
0.05 P	0.125	0.395	7.0
0.05 P + 1.0 N	0.125	1.395	19.4
1.00 N	0.075	1.395	5.3

2. Discussion -

The control yields of the assay alga, Selenastrum capricornutum, indicate that the potential for primary productivity in Moses Lake was extremely high at both sample collection times (04/03/75, 09/10/75). In the May and September assays for Stations 01 and 02 (the Pelican Horn arm of the lake), a significant increase in yield over that of the control occurred when nitrogen alone was added, indicating nitrogen limitation. Addition of phosphorus alone did not stimulate growth significantly beyond the control yields. It should be noted that the mean orthophosphorus levels at Station 01 were substantially higher than those for the other four lake stations on each sampling date (0.112 mg/l in April, 0.527 mg/l in July, 0.735 mg/l in September). These inflated phosphorus levels, and subsequently the indicated primary limitation by nitrogen in the Pelican Horn arm, probably result from a sewage disposal outfall located directly upstream from lake sampling Station 01 (near Marsh Island).

Algal assay results from Stations 04 and 05 in May indicate primary limitation by phosphorus in the northwestern reaches of Moses Lake during May, but suggest colimitation during fall, when only the simultaneous addition of both phosphorus and nitrogen resulted in an increase in yield over that of the control.

The lake data yield extremely low mean inorganic nitrogen to orthophosphorus (N/P) ratios for Moses Lake during summer and fall (N/P=1), indicating nitrogen limitation in the lake at those times. During spring, the lake data suggest nitrogen limitation at Stations 01 and 02, and primary limitation by phosphorus at Station 03-05. (A mean N/P ratio of 14/1 or greater is generally considered to reflect phosphorus limitation).

IV. NUTRIENT LOADINGS
(See Appendix D for data)

For the determination of nutrient loadings, the Washington National Guard collected monthly near-surface grab samples from each of the tributary sites indicated on the maps (pages v,vi), except for the high runoff months of March and April when two samples were collected. Sampling was begun in September 1974, and was completed in August 1975.

Through an interagency agreement, stream flow estimates for the year of sampling and a "normalized" or average year were provided by the Washington District Office of the USGS for the tributary sites nearest the lake.

In this report, nutrient loads for sampled tributaries were determined by using a modification of a USGS computer program for calculating stream loadings. Nutrient loads indicated for tributaries are those measured minus known point source loads, if any.

Nutrient loadings for unsampled "minor tributaries and immediate drainage" ("ZZ" of USGS) were estimated by using the mean annual nutrient loads, in $kg/km^2/year$, in Crab Creek, Rocky Coulee Wasteway, and Rocky Ford Creek at Stations A-2, B-1, and D-1 and multiplying the means by the ZZ area in km^2.

The operator of the Moses Lake wastewater treatment plant provided monthly effluent samples and corresponding flow data.

A. Waste Sources:

1. Known Municipal -

Name	Pop.* Served	Treatment*	Mean Flow ($m^3/d \times 10^3$)	Receiving Water
Moses Lake	12,500	Trickling Filter	3.486	Moses Lake

2. Known Industrial - None

*Provided by treatment plant operator.

B. Annual Total Phosphorus Loading - Average Year:

1. Inputs -

Source	kg P/yr	% of total
a. Tributaries (nonpoint load) -		
A-2 Crab Creek	4,780	15.3
B-1 Rocky Coulee Wasteway	3,830	12.3
D-1 Rocky Ford Creek	11,070	35.5
b. Minor tributaries and immediate drainage (nonpoint load) -	1,055	3.4
c. Known municipal STP's -		
Moses Lake	9,905	31.8
d. Septic tanks* -	20	0.1
e. Known industrial - None		
f. Direct precipitation** -	485	1.6
Totals	31,145	100.0
2. Outputs - A-1 Crab Creek	17,230	
3. Net annual P accumulation -	13,915	

*Estimate based on 20 lakeshore residences and 1 park.
**Estimated (See NES Working Paper No. 175).

C. Annual Total Nitrogen Loading - Average Year:

1. Inputs -

Source	kg N/yr	% of total
a. Tributaries (nonpoint load) -		
A-2 Crab Creek	95,105	26.0
B-1 Rocky Coulee Wasteway	60,630	16.9
D-1 Rocky Ford Creek	135,975	38.0
b. Minor tributaries and immediate drainage (nonpoint load) -	14,540	4.1
c. Known municipal STP's -		
Moses Lake	21,210	5.9
d. Septic tanks* -	780	0.2
e. Known industrial - None		
f. Direct precipitation** -	29,775	8.3
Totals	357,915	100.0
2. Outputs - A-1 Crab Creek	206,055	
3. Net annual N accumulation -	151,860	

*Estimate based on 70 lakeshore residences and 1 park.
**Estimated (See NES Working Paper No. 175).

D. Mean Annual Nonpoint Nutrient Export by Subdrainage Area:

Tributary	kg P/km^2/yr	kg N/km^2/yr
Crab Creek	1	16
Rocky Coulee Wasteway	5	79
Rocky Ford Creek	9	112

E. Yearly Loadings:

In the following table, the existing phosphorus annual loading is compared to the relationship proposed by Vollenweider (1975). Essentially, his "eutrophic" loading is that at which the receiving waters would become eutrophic or remain eutrophic; his "oligotrophic" loading is that which would result in the receiving water remaining oligotrophic or becoming oligotrophic if morphometry permitted. A "mesotrophic" loading would be considered one between "eutrophic" and "oligotrophic".

Note that Vollenweider's model may not apply to lakes with short hydraulic retention times or in which light penetration is severely restricted by high concentrations of suspended solids in the surface waters.

	Total Yearly Phosphorus Loading ($g/m^2/yr$)
Estimated loading for Moses Lake	1.13
Vollenweider's "eutrophic" loading	0.54
Vollenweider's "oligotrophic" loading	0.27

V. LITERATURE REVIEWED

Ketelle, Martha J. and Paul D. Uttormark. 1971. Problem Lakes in the United States. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Project #16010 EHR. University of Wisconsin, Madison, Wisconsin.

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Vollenweider, R. A. 1975. Input-Output Models With Special Reference to the Phosphorus Loading Concept in Limnology. Schweiz. Z. Hydrol. 37:53-84.

Welch, E.B. and L.T. Lindell. 1977. Moses Lake Restoration. Environmental Outlook Vol. 5, No. 5. Institute for Environmental Studies, University of Washington, Seattle, Washington.

Welcott, E. E. 1965. Lakes of Washington, Volume II. Washington Division of Water Resources, Water Supply Bulletin, 14 and 15.

VI. APPENDICES

APPENDIX A
CONVERSION FACTORS

CONVERSION FACTORS

Hectares x 2.471 = acres

Kilometers x 0.6214 = miles

Meters x 3.281 = feet

Cubic meters x 8.107×10^{-4} = acre/feet

Square kilometers x 0.3861 = square miles

Cubic meters/sec x 35.315 = cubic feet/sec

Centimeters x 0.3937 = inches

Kilograms x 2.205 = pounds

Kilograms/square kilometer x 5.711 = lbs/square mile

APPENDIX B
TRIBUTARY FLOW DATA

[redacted]

APPENDIX C

PHYSICAL AND CHEMICAL DATA

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

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APPENDIX D

TRIBUTARY AND WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT DATA

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DATE	TIME	DEPTH	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
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[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	1.342	0.289	0.175	0.095	0.122
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	1.344	0.289	0.176	0.138	0.150
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	1.339	0.583	0.096	2.028	0.150
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	1.337	0.288	0.102	0.128	0.129
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	1.728	0.288	0.094	0.128	0.128
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	1.288	1.468	0.104	0.128	0.130
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	1.789	0.468	0.077	0.244	0.176
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	1.388	0.468	0.176	0.178	0.150
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	1.249	0.225	0.105	0.105	0.138
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	1.289	0.475	0.178	0.114	0.152
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	1.288	0.358	0.105	0.105	0.138
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	1.749	0.359	0.174	0.095	0.128
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	1.387	0.358	0.103	0.105	0.140

APPENDIX E

PARAMETRIC RANKINGS OF LAKES SAMPLED BY NES IN 1975

STATE OF WASHINGTON

Mean or median values for six of the key parameters evaluated in establishing the trophic conditions of Washington lakes sampled are presented to allow direct comparison of the ranking, by parameter, of each lake relative to the others. Median total phosphorus, median inorganic nitrogen and median dissolved orthophosphorus levels are expressed in mg/l. Chlorophyll a values are expressed in ug/l. To maintain consistent rank order with the preceding parameters, the mean Secchi disc depth, in inches, is subtracted from 500. Similarly, minimum dissolved oxygen values are subtracted from 15 to create table entries.

LAKE DATA TO BE USED IN RANKINGS

LAKE CODE	LAKE NAME	MEDIAN TOTAL P	MEDIAN INORG N	SUB-MEAN SEC	MEAN CHLORA	25-MIN DO	MEDIAN SECCHI DEPTH
5301	AMERICAN LAKE	0.027	0.195	343.000	4.022	15.090	0.007
5302	BANKS LAKE	0.021	0.040	304.535	7.373	10.000	0.007
5303	CHELAN LAKE	0.005	0.079	111.440	0.405	6.440	0.025
5304	DIAMOND LAKE	0.014	0.060	303.667	14.537	14.290	0.030
5305	GREEN LAKE	0.027	0.050	415.000	2.005	10.400	0.009
5306	HEDGELOW LAKE	0.007	0.040	290.250	1.400	9.250	0.002
5307	HAYFIELD LAKE	0.014	0.100	402.000	4.250	10.405	0.007
5308	MEDICAL LAKE	0.075	0.225	401.734	10.425	15.000	0.046
5309	MYERS LAKE	0.115	0.150	403.600	25.060	14.602	0.030
5310	OPETTE LAKE	0.010	0.110	403.333	1.205	7.290	0.009
5311	SAMANISH LAKE	0.015	0.210	374.070	7.290	14.400	2.034
5312	WHATCOM LAKE	0.009	0.320	290.000	3.422	10.400	0.009
5313	LOWER BAKER RESERVOIR	0.033	0.150	435.500	4.075	7.290	0.022